

Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill Response

Saturday, May 1, 2010

Status

Discharge rate is estimated at 210,000 gallons per day.

The oil will progress northward and eastward and is estimated to make landfall along the Mississippi and Alabama coastline as early as Monday morning. Other locations along the Florida panhandle may be affected by early next week.

Rough weather is forecast for the weekend and may cause heavy oil inundation to beach areas.

On-water response operations ceased late-afternoon Thursday due to the weather and are not anticipated to start again until Monday, May 3.

The Response

The first wildlife rehabilitation center is being established in Venice, LA, and a second is planned near Mobile, AL.



More than 41 miles of booming has been deployed, and more booming is available. Dispersant has been applied to more than 13 square miles of oil slick, which has been somewhat effective in controlling the spread of oil.

The Service is advising the Incident Command on methods to mitigate the damage from the oil on wildlife. It also is conducting, coordinating, and supervising search and capture for oiled wildlife.

The Service is conducting aerial flights to identify oiled wildlife and help facilitate recovery and treatment.

The Threat to Wildlife

Service personnel are concerned that many species of wildlife, some already threatened or endangered, face grave risk from the spill. Ground surveys this past week at Breton National Wildlife Refuge, a 5,000-acre wilderness area, found more than 34,000 individual birds including roughly:

2,000 pairs of brown pelicans;
5,000 pairs of Royal Terns;
5,000 pairs of Caspian Terns; and
5,000 pairs of feeding, loafing, and nesting gulls and other shore birds.

Species that could be affected by the approaching oil slick include:

The Loggerhead, Green, Hawksbill, Kemp's Ridley Leatherback sea turtles;



Large wading birds (Roseate Spoonbill, Ibis, Heron, Egret);

Beach-nesting terns and gulls (Caspian Tern, Royal Tern, Sandwich Tern, Least Tern, Laughing Gull, Black Skimmer);





Beach-nesting shorebirds (American Oystercatcher, Wilson's Plover, Snowy Plover);

Marsh birds (Mottled Duck, Clapper Rail, Black Rail, Seaside Sparrow).

National Wildlife Refuges

Up to 20 National Wildlife Refuges could potentially be affected by the spill. Four are of immediate concern:

Breton Island National Wildlife Refuge

The second oldest wildlife refuge in the country, established by President Theodore Roosevelt in 1904. He visited in 1915, the only refuge he ever visited. Breton, which includes Breton Island and all of the Chandeleur Islands in St. Bernard and Plaquemine Parish, LA, provides habitat for nesting wading birds and seabirds, as well as wintering shorebirds and waterfowl; 23 species



of seabirds and shorebirds frequently use the refuge, and 13 species nest on the various islands. The most abundant nesters are brown pelicans, laughing gulls, and royal, Caspian, and Sandwich terns.

Bon Secour

From the French meaning "safe harbor," Bon Secour contains 7,000 acres of wildlife habitat for migratory birds, nesting sea turtles and the endangered Alabama beach mouse. Refuge beaches serve as nesting sites for loggerhead and Kemp's Ridley sea turtles. More than 370 species of birds have been identified on the refuge during migratory seasons, including ospreys and herons.

Grand Bay

Located in coastal Mississippi and Alabama, Grand Bay National Wildlife was established in 1992. The 10,200-acre refuge partially overlays the Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve. Species found at the refuge include the gopher tortoise, red-cockaded woodpecker and brown pelican.

Delta

Established in 1935 in the delta at the mouth of the Mississippi River, Delta NWR comprises 48,800 acres of marshlands and open water. The primary purpose of the refuge was to provide sanctuary and habitat for wintering waterfowl. Species on the

refuge include: American alligator, Brown Pelican, Arctic peregrine falcon, deer, swamp rabbits and piping plover. The marshes and waterways of support a diversity of fish species, including speckled trout, redfish, flounder, catfish and largemouth bass.

Hotlines

For media: Joint information Center numbers are 985/902 5231 and 985/902 5240.

Reporters with questions about the Service's wildlife response can call Tom MacKenzie at 678/296 6400.

To report claims related to damages: 800/440 0858.

To volunteer: 866-448-5816.

To report oiled or injured wildlife: 866/557 1401

On the web

The USCG Joint Incident Command
<http://www.deepwaterhorizonresponse.com/go/site/2931/>

Department of the Interior:
<http://www.doi.gov>

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:
<http://www.fws.gov/home/dhoilspill>

A news site from four government agencies and private companies BP and Transocean:
<http://www.deepwaterhorizonresponse.com>